

# THE SPIRITUAL ISSUES OF THE WAR

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## IN MEMORIAM: WILLIAM TEMPLE



"I am deeply grieved to learn of the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury. He was rightly considered a good friend of the United States, and his efforts to promote Anglo-American understanding and co-operation were unceasing. As an ardent advocate of international co-operation, based on Christian principles, he exercised profound influence throughout the world. The American people join me in extending this expression of sympathy."

The King replied:—

"I thank you sincerely for your telegram, and greatly appreciate this expression of sympathy from yourself and the American people. The untimely death of the Archbishop of Canterbury will be widely regretted throughout this country, and indeed throughout the whole Christian community."

### THE BISHOP OF LONDON'S BROADCAST

In a broadcast on October 26th, the Bishop of London, Dr. G. F. Fisher, said:—

"The greatest thing about William Temple was the simplicity of his character. With all his immense range of interests, with all his intellectual brilliance, with all his great influence in the Christian Churches, with all his vital concern for the Church of England, Christian unity, national well-being and so on, he was himself utterly simple, single-minded, without a thought of self, or of anything else but the service of love which he owed and gladly gave to God and to his fellow men. I heard him once at a great student movement conference, packed with young men and women from the Universities, the kind of audience which above all he loved; he talked to them for forty-five minutes on religion. It was strong meat, a discourse

To the great grief, not only of Britain but in a real sense of the whole Christian world, Dr. William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury since St. George's Day, 1942, died suddenly on October 26th, 1944. In this number of *Spiritual Issues* we print, for the special benefit of our Overseas readers, some of the tributes paid to the late Archbishop, especially from foreign countries, and a short account of the funeral and memorial services.

### TRIBUTES

#### *King and President*

President Roosevelt has sent the following message to the King:—

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closely argued, profound and challenging; then, for ten minutes at the end, he declared his own personal faith in the simplest words: Faith in the Jesus whom he knew as Lord and Saviour and Present Friend. There was the real man, and all his brilliance of power never obscured it; that was the secret of his amazing capacity for friendship. All sorts of people were his friends, among the great and the humble. He never forgot them and was never too busy for them, and refused no call they made upon him. In any generation of Englishmen William Temple would have stood out as he conspicuously did in ours. So great was the range of his interests and his gifts and his effective influence that a brief appreciation like this must be altogether inadequate. The quality of his mind is shown in everything that he wrote or said. Whatever the subject, he found in it something original, stimulating, profound, and he held any audience by that characteristic delivery of his—vigorous, lucid and utterly sincere. He did not know how to be commonplace, though he knew very well when to be frivolous. There were no limits to his intellectual interests, he ranged over the whole field of history, philosophy and theology. I remember him saying once that he was taking with him for his summer holiday certain books as he wanted to fill a gap in his knowledge of the history of Spain.

"After his time at Rugby and Balliol College, he became a Fellow and Lecturer in Philosophy at Queen's College, Oxford. If he had chosen to become a professional philosopher, he would have been a great one. When many years later, as Archbishop of York, he delivered the Gifford Lectures, he made a notable contribution to the philosophy of religion, and he did it among all the distractions of his public office. He could even write philosophy in the train. I remember seeing him off once at the station on his way to York, when he told me that he hoped on the journey to turn a particularly difficult corner in his Gifford Lectures. But at Oxford, other interests than philosophy already occupied him, and already he was throwing himself into those interests in people, and how they lived, and in their social problems, which never left him. There must be many people in Bermondsey now who remember that young, vital, bulky figure of his in the Oxford and Bermondsey Clubs. There are very many members of the Workers' Educational Association, of which he was President for sixteen years, who remember his brilliant lectures, his fascination in conversation and that tremendous laugh of his. Already at Oxford, it was clear to

him that above every other interest, was his concern for the Christian faith and the Church of England and that to her service his life was to be dedicated.

"It was no less clear to others that he would inevitably be a leader of it. After four years as headmaster of Repton, an interlude of sheer delight to him, he came to St. James's, Piccadilly. It is typical of him that even while he threw himself into every movement of the day, and was a great popular preacher, he had a special care for the spiritual interests of the servants of the many hotels in his parish. He became a leader of the Reforming Movement of the Church of England called THE LIFE AND LIBERTY, out of which in the end came the Church Assembly. He gave up St. James's to give himself wholly to that work. When it was finished, he became a Canon of Westminster, but had hardly done so before he was appointed Bishop of Manchester. Thence after eight years, he went in 1929 to York, and only two years ago to Canterbury. All this time he was becoming a central figure in what is called the Ecumenical Movement, the drawing together of the diverse elements of the Christian Church, Orthodox, Lutheran, Reform and Anglican. In a series of Conferences, he became personally known to and trusted by the leaders of all these Churches and exercised a powerful influence by the virtue of his theological insight and his wide sympathies. There was no one else who held quite his position. To have him at Canterbury meant an immense strengthening of the ties between all the Christian Churches.

"From Canterbury, together with the Archbishop of York, he launched a great programme of advance for the Church of England. It had a strong emphasis upon social betterment, the cause which he always had at heart, and he did not hesitate to give his views on economic as well as social questions. His speeches caught the ear of the nation. Everybody admired his courage, his forthrightness, and the clear inspiration of his lead. But the social emphasis was never the chief thing in the speeches which he delivered in England and Scotland at that time. As he himself pointed out to critics, the larger part of what he said was devoted to theology and the Christian religion, and everything else depended upon that. Indeed, everything in his life depended upon that. It is an untold loss for the Church of England, for the nation, and it is not too much to say for the world, that so soon, so prematurely and at such a time, this great churchman, this great Englishman, should be taken from us."



## The Archbishop of Westminster

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, Dr. Griffin, wrote:—

"The death of Dr. Temple is a national loss, which will be particularly and acutely felt at this time of approaching national and international reconstruction. All who were privileged to know him could not but admire the largeness of his spirit, the range and power of his mind. He shone in many fields and combined a speculative and practical grasp as it is rarely given to man to do. He was in particular a warm friend of co-operation between Christians in social and international questions, and my own meetings with him had left me looking forward to many years of fruitful association in those tasks."

Striking tributes were paid by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland, the Chairman of the Congregational Union (Dr. Micklem), the Chief Rabbi, and many other leaders in Church and State.

## British Council of Churches

Among further tributes to Dr. Temple is one from the executive committee of the British Council of Churches, saying: "His death comes as an especially grievous blow to the cause of Christian unity, which he served with enthusiasm and wise statesmanship in manifold ways. As president of the British Council of Churches since its inauguration, he guided its policy and work with wisdom, sympathetic understanding, and unflinching courtesy which won the complete confidence and grateful affection of all its members."

## From Foreign Churches

### America

The American Bishops visiting England wrote as follows to the Bishop of London:—

October 28th, 1944.

"Dear Lord Bishop,

"We write to you as Dean of the Province of Canterbury on behalf of the Episcopal Church of America to extend to you and through you and the Church of England our deep and heartfelt sympathy on the death of His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. W. Temple.

"His death at this particular time is an incalculable loss, not only to the whole Anglican Communion but to the whole Christian world. Particularly, in America, where he was well known personally and

through his writings and his leadership of the Œcumenical Movement, will his loss be felt by the members of the churches of every denomination.

"He leaves a rich legacy in the fields of scholarship and in the life of the nation in addition to his notable contributions to the intellectual and spiritual life of the Church, for all of which we humbly thank God and pray for grace to carry forward the many activities he so nobly began. May he rest in peace and light perpetual shine upon him.

"We are your Lordship's faithful and affectionate brothers in Christ.

(Signed) V. A. OLDHAM,  
Bishop of Albany

HENRY W. HOBSON,  
Bishop of S. Ohio

Delegates from the Episcopal Church of America to the Archbishop and Province of Canterbury."

### Russia

The Acting Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Alexei, Metropolitan of Leningrad, has sent the following message to the British Ambassador in Moscow:—

"We were deeply affected by the news regarding the death of His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Sacred Synod expresses, on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church, its heartfelt sympathy for the Anglican Church in its great loss and prays for the peace of the deceased's soul. Please accept, Mr. Ambassador, our sincerest feelings of condolence, and be kind enough to convey them to the high representatives of the Anglican Church."

### Greece

The Archbishop of Athens wrote:—

"The people and Church of Greece are very much grieved to hear of the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Greek Church particularly feels the loss deeply and joins me in my personal grief. The Archbishop of Canterbury was held in the very greatest respect in Greece, first, because he was a great intellectual leader and scholar whose works, both theological and philosophical, are well known and highly regarded in Greece; secondly, because he was a man whose social outlook corresponded to the social aspirations of the modern world; and, thirdly, because he had always shown a particular sympathy for the struggle and sufferings of the Greek people."

The Archbishop of Athens was particularly moved at the news because it was only a



few days ago that he received a message from Dr. Temple rejoicing with the Church and people of Greece at their liberation.

#### *France*

Dr. Marc Boegner, President of the Federation of French Reformed Churches, writes:—

“The sudden death of the Archbishop of Canterbury has provoked the deepest emotion in French Protestant circles. I cannot express the grief which I personally feel. I was full of joy at the thought of seeing him again next week after four years of separation. However, our great grief does not make us forget all that God has given us and will continue to give us by the example of this great and courageous worker for Christian unity. The World Council of Christian Churches, faithful to Dr. Temple’s inspiration, will persevere with the work undertaken by him. To this great task, more important than ever in a world dominated by violence and hatred, the French Protestant Churches are determined to bring their fullest co-operation with all the strength which God will give them.”

#### THE FUNERAL AT CANTERBURY

Outwardly the City of Canterbury was sad and cheerless on October 31st, the day of the Archbishop’s funeral. The city wears the honourable scars of its heavy bombing, and in addition, torrential and unceasing rain, with leaden skies, seemed expressive of the grief into which the Church and Nation had been plunged by the sudden passing of the Archbishop in whom so many hopes were centred.

Inside the Cathedral the scene was different. The nave was thronged by a vast mass of the ordinary folk of England, who meant so much to William Temple and to whom he meant so much. In the Choir was a great concourse of the nation, distinguished

representatives of the State, the Archbishop’s own diocesan clergy, and a striking representation of other churches and nations. Among those present were the Archbishop Germanos, of Thyateira; the Moderator of the Church of Scotland; Dr. Marc Boegner, head of the French Protestant Church; Dr. Visser ’t Hooft, of the World Council of Churches; the American Bishops now visiting England; chaplains of the Canadian, Australian and American Forces—these were only a few to be noted in the great crowd.

Before the altar lay the coffin of the Archbishop, against a background of indescribable splendour and brilliance. Floodlighting illumined the silver colouring of the altar frontal, and the colourful robes of the Cathedral clergy and of the main participants in the service—the Dean of Canterbury, the Archbishop of York and Archbishop Lord Lang.

The service was simple and beautiful. The note of grief was expressed by the ancient anthem “O Saviour of the world” and the psalm “De profundis”; the note of hope by the Lesson from 2 Corinthians, 4 and 5, and by the great Easter hymn “The strife is o’er”; the note of sympathy by the prayers of commendation and those on behalf of the mourners.

The familiar hymn “The King of Love my Shepherd is”, in which the congregation joined heartily, seemed to express the feelings of all, which in a strange way, were both “grave and gay”.

The whole scene was one of fellowship, music and light, and expressed the conviction in the minds of all that though the human voice of William Temple was silenced his spirit had been liberated for an even wider and greater service than before.

Another service, equally representative of Church and Nation, was held in Westminster Abbey at the same time.